

State of Delaware Child Protection Accountability Commission Permanency for Adolescents Committee

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2015 -- 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

In Attendance:

The Hon. Peter B. Jones (Co-Chair)
Shirley Roberts (Co-Chair)
Tania Culley, Esq., OCA
Kelly Ensslin, Esq., OCA
Felicia Kellum, DSCYF

Kathryn Lunger, Esq., OPD
Rachael Neff, Family Court
Amanda Sipple, OCA
Gwen Stubbolo, CASA
Brittany Willard, CPAC Data Analyst

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Judge Peter Jones, Co-Chair, welcomed everyone and attendees introduced themselves. The Committee welcomed Director Shirley Roberts, Division of Family Services.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from October 9, 2015 were approved.

III. COMMITTEE ROLE IN IMPLEMENTATION OF P.L. 113-183

a. Required Judicial Findings for APPLA

Judge Jones led discussion on the required judicial findings for APPLA. Judge Jones has completed a cheat sheet for language required in APPLA orders to ensure title IV-E compliance. This chart will be laminated and made available to Judges and professionals. Judge Jones and Rachael Neff are updating the IV-E Chart. The Committee agreed that they will wait for a report back from the CIP Steering Committee as to the next steps to update APPLA changes and whether many of the current rules should be moved to statute.

b. Expansion of Other Permanency Options

The Committee discussed the expansion of how Delaware currently uses permanency options. A discussion of beginning to use “fit and willing relative” occurred. A concern that was presented is that the “fit and willing relative” plan may not encourage increased effort to find permanency for the child. As the federal government has included fit and willing relative as a permanency plan, the state should consider using this plan in appropriate cases. The Permanency Options Workgroup is tasked with updating all permanency options and developing trainings.

c. Normalcy/Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard

The Committee discussed the normalcy/reasonable and prudent parent standard. The draft legislation will be distributed to the Committee for comments and edits. Committee members should circulate within their agencies and provide feedback by April 1, 2016.

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d. Rights of Youth in DSCYF Custody

The Rights of Youth in DSCYF Custody package was completed and shared with partners. The committee agreed to remove this initiative from future agendas.

IV. DELAWARE YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES INITIATIVE TRANSITION PLAN

a. Self-Sufficiency Benchmarks

The Self-Sufficiency Benchmarks documents were distributed for review. The Committee discussed the need to update the benchmarks because no changes have been made in two years. The Committee agreed a workgroup is necessary to address changes including P.L. 113-183 and Extended Jurisdiction. The workgroup will be tasked with training about the self-sufficiency benchmarks. Ms. Kellum and Amanda Sipple will work to assemble a workgroup for these tasks.

b. Youth Transition Guide

The Youth Transition Guide is completed for the most part and will be provided to the Youth Advisory Council at the next available opening in the schedule. OCA will share one of its interns with Felicia Kellum to assist in finalizing the guide.

c. Youth Involvement in Court

The Family Court Observation Project summary has been compiled. Ms. Neff shared the survey report summary with the Committee (see attached). The Committee discussed that a youth-focused one-page summary should be created to help youth understand the results of the survey. The Committee agreed that the one-page summary should also be shared with the youth who participated in the surveys, as a part of the Family Court welcome packets and at a Youth Advisory Council meeting. The Court has begun providing YAC welcome packets when youth attend court hearings.

d. NCC Mural

The Committee discussed that additional funds were collected as donations to the Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) for the mural. There are currently \$7,100 in funds available. OCA will be working to raise funding for the additional \$10,000 needed to complete the mural. Ms. Kellum reported that youth agreed to complete the mural in the summer of 2016. An update about the possible dates and funding for the mural will be shared with the Committee at the next meeting.

e. Sex Education and Pregnancy Prevention

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Kelly Ensslin reported that she working on a resource packet for pregnant and parenting teens. DFS is collaborating with their contract partners to provide training to foster parents at the May Foster Parent Recognition event. Ms. Ensslin will assist. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Extended Jurisdiction

The Committee reviewed the final Extended Jurisdiction packet. The Committee asked for a motion to dissolve the workgroup as they have completed the assigned tasks. The motion was carried by Tania Culley, seconded by Felicia Kellum and all voted in favor.

b. Permanency Options

The Committee discussed the work of the Permanency Options Workgroup including training, bonding assessments, and financial supports for guardianships. Permanency Training will be available online soon. Members of the workgroup are reaching out to mental health agencies to provide training. The Committee is developing a summary on financial supports for the various permanency options. The workgroup has revised the permanency planning committee questions as a part of the recommendations provided. The workgroup is exploring how to improve all mental health evaluations used in DSCYF custody cases.

The workgroup will continue to offer trainings statewide. The workgroup has several new tasks assigned to it by the APPLA Action Plan and should provide an action plan on those items to the Committee at the next meeting.

c. APPLA

The workgroup has completed all assigned task and asks the committee for permission to dissolve. The motion is carried by Ms. Kellum, seconded by Gwen Stubbolo and all voted in favor.

VI. DUAL STATUS YOUTH STATISTICS

a. APPLA

The number of youth with the plan of APPLA continue to decrease as the cases are reviewed. No new youth under 16 have had this plan assigned, and only 2 under 16 remain as of January 31, 2016. OCA, DFS and the Court continue to review data and court orders to ensure accurate statistics.

b. Extended Jurisdiction

The Committee reviewed the Extended Jurisdiction statistics. There continue to be a

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consistent number of youth in Extended Jurisdiction. During the last quarter the number of entries increased. The Committee discussed the interagency efforts on data sharing as the Committee works to evaluate the data in this area.

c. Juvenile Justice and Expungements

The Committee reviewed the statistics for juvenile justice and expungements. The report indicated that about half of OCA clients aged 11 or older are involved with the juvenile justice system. This number has not changed since statistics began. OCA continues to monitor juvenile justice outcomes and apply for expungements as youth become eligible. The Committee discussed that a barrier to expungements has been obtaining the funds to pay for fingerprinting. Director Roberts agreed to review the barrier and report back at the next meeting.

VII. 2016 MEETING DATES

•April 29, 2016 •July 29, 2016 •October 21, 2016 - PLEASE NOTE THE DATE CHANGE

All meetings will take place from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. in both Wilmington and Georgetown.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT AND ADJOURNMENT

There being no public comment, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00.